

Department of Justice

§ 2.56

be offered the opportunity to waive disclosure of such document without prejudice to his right to later review the document or a summary of the document. The examiner panel may disclose the document and proceed with the hearing so long as the prisoner waives his right to advance disclosure. If the prisoner chooses not to waive pre-hearing disclosure, the examiner panel shall continue the hearing to the next docket to permit disclosure. A continuance for disclosure should not be extended beyond the next hearing docket.

(f) *Late received documents.* If a document containing new and significant adverse information is received after a parole hearing but before all review and appellate procedures have been concluded, the prisoner shall be given a rehearing on the next docket. A copy of the document shall be forwarded to the institution for inclusion in the prisoner's institutional file. The Commission shall notify the prisoner of the new hearing and his right to request disclosure of the document pursuant to this section. If a late received document provides favorable information, merely restates already available information or provides insignificant information, the case will not be reopened for disclosure.

(g) *Reopened cases.* Whenever a case is reopened for a new hearing and there is a document the Commission intends to use in making its determination, a copy of the document shall be forwarded for inclusion in the prisoner's institutional file and the prisoner shall be informed of his right to request disclosure of the document pursuant to this section.

[50 FR 40374, Oct. 3, 1985]

§ 2.56 Disclosure of Parole Commission file.

(a) *Procedure.* Copies of disclosable records pertaining to a prisoner or a parolee which are contained in the subject's Parole Commission file may be obtained by that prisoner or parolee upon written request pursuant to this section. Such requests shall be answered as soon as possible in the order of their receipt. Other persons may obtain copies of such documents only upon proof of authorization from the prisoner or parolee concerned or to the

extent permissible under the Freedom of Information Act or the Privacy Act of 1974.

(b) *Scope of disclosure.* Disclosure under this section shall extend to Commission documents concerning the prisoner or parolee making the request. Documents which are contained in the regional file and which are prepared by agencies other than the Commission which are also subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, shall be referred to the appropriate agency for a response pursuant to its regulations, unless the document has previously been prepared for disclosure pursuant to § 2.55, or is fully disclosable on its face, or has been prepared by the Bureau of Prisons. Any Bureau of Prisons documents in a parole file are duplicates of records in the inmate's institutional file. Before referring these documents to the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), the Commission will ask the requestor whether he also wants the BOP documents in his parole file processed.

(1) Requests that are only for a copy of the tape recording of a hearing will be processed ahead of requests seeking multiple documents from the Parole Commission file (priority processing). A requester may limit the scope of the request to a tape recording only (or to a tape recording and/or up to two documents) and thereby qualify for priority processing. For example, a request for the tape recording and the examiner's summary of a hearing qualifies for priority processing.

(2) [Reserved]

(c) *Exemptions to disclosure.* A document or segregable portion thereof may be withheld from disclosure to the extent it contains material exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(1)-(9).

(d) *Specification of documents withheld.* Documents that are withheld pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section shall be identified for the requester together with the applicable exemption for withholding each document or portion thereof. In addition, the requester must be informed of the right to appeal any non-disclosure to the Office of the Chairman.

(e) *Hearing record.* Upon request by the prisoner or parolee concerned, the Commission shall make available a

copy of any verbatim record (e.g., tape recording) which it has retained of a hearing, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 4208(f).

(f) *Costs.* In any case in which billable costs exceed \$14.00 (based upon the provisions and fee schedules as set forth in the Department of Justice regulation 28 CFR 16.10), requesters will be notified that they will be required to reimburse the United States for such costs before copies are released.

(g) *Relation to other provisions.* Disclosure under this section is authorized by 28 CFR 16.85 under which the Parole Commission is exempt from the record disclosure provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974, as well as certain other provisions of the Act pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(j)(2). Requests submitted under the Freedom of Information Act or the Privacy Act for the requester's own records will be processed under this section. In no event will the Commission consider satisfaction of a request under this section, the Freedom of Information Act, or the Privacy Act of 1974, to be a prerequisite to an adequate parole hearing under 18 U.S.C. 4208 (for which disclosure is exclusively governed by § 2.55 of this part) or to the exercise of a parole applicant's appeal rights under 18 U.S.C. 4215. Provisions of the Freedom of Information Act not specifically addressed by these regulations (including the reading room) are covered by 28 CFR, part 16, subpart A.

(h) *Appeals*—(1) *Appeals to the Chairman.* When a request for access to Parole Commission records or a waiver of fees has been denied in whole or in part, or when the Commission fails to respond to a request within the time limits set forth in the FOIA, the requester may appeal the denial of the request to the Chairman of the Commission within thirty days from the date of the notice denying the request. An appeal to the Chairman shall be made in writing and addressed to the Office of the Chairman, U.S. Parole Commission, 5550 Friendship Boulevard, Suite 420, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815.

(2) *Decision on appeal.* A decision affirming in whole or in part the denial of a request shall include a brief statement of the reason or reasons for the affirmance, including each FOIA exemption relied upon and its relation to

each record withheld, and a statement that judicial review of the denial is available in the U.S. district court for the judicial district in which the requester resides or has his principal place of business, the judicial district in which the requested records are located, or in the District of Columbia. If the denial of a request is reversed on appeal to the Chairman, the requester shall be so notified and the request shall be processed promptly by Commission staff in accordance with the Chairman's decision on appeal.

(i) *Expedited processing of Requests.* (1) The Commission will provide expedited processing of a request when a requester has demonstrated a compelling need as defined in this section and has presented a statement certified by such person to be true and correct to the best of such person's knowledge and belief. A requester may demonstrate "compelling need" by establishing one of the following:

(i) That failure to obtain the requested records on an expedited basis could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or

(ii) With respect to a request made by a person primarily engaged in disseminating information, urgency to inform the public concerning actual or alleged federal government activity.

(2) A determination as to whether to provide expedited processing shall be made within ten days after the date of the request. However, the fact of lawful imprisonment in a correctional facility or revocation of parole shall not be deemed to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual. The Commission shall process as soon as practicable any request for records to which it has granted expedited processing. An administrative appeal of a denial of expedited processing may be made to the Chairman of the Commission within thirty days from the date of notice denying expedited processing.

[50 FR 40375, Oct. 3, 1985, as amended at 52 FR 47921, Dec. 17, 1987; 53 FR 24933, July 1, 1988; 53 FR 47187, Nov. 22, 1988; 54 FR 27839, June 30, 1989; 58 FR 51780, Oct. 5, 1993; 62 FR 51602, Oct. 2, 1997]